

all are immensely proud of the contributions they have made to our country and our State. I congratulate them and wish them 50 more years of success and prosperity in the great State of Utah.

CONCEPT2

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, like most Americans, I start off the year with my new year's resolution to work harder at getting in shape. As always, my first stop is the Concept2 rowing machine in the Senate gym. I have used it for years, and always think of Vermont when I do.

The rowing machines are made in Vermont, and last fall the Burlington Free Press had an excellent article about the company and its founders. I ask that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Free Press, Oct. 14, 2005]

WHAT A CONCEPT

(By Matt Crawford)

MORRISVILLE.—Peter and Dick Dreissigacker will be on Boston's Charles River next weekend, rowing their way toward the finish line in the annual Head of the Charles regatta.

The Dreissigacker brothers are two members of an eight-man team called the Motley Rowing Club—a team that captured third place in its division during last year's race. If the Motley team is beaten again, part of the blame can be placed squarely on the broad shoulders of the Dreissigackers.

What Nike is to running, what Orvis is to fly-fishing, what Burton is to snowboarding, Concept2 is to rowing. Concept2 is a Morrisville-based company that employs 55 people, and it is run and owned by Mistery Peter and Dick Dreissigacker. The company leads the world in producing oars used by crews and sculling teams and controls a significant portion of the global indoor rowing machine market, too. "Their products are found around the world," said Alex Machi, director of rowing at Middlebury College. "They easily dominate the oar manufacturing business."

How two Connecticut brothers maneuvered their internationally successful company into the center of the rowing universe from a small town in northern Vermont is a remarkable tale, one that continues to evolve on rivers and ponds and indoor gyms around the world . . .

"The challenge," said Peter, "is trying to continue to improve on what we've got."

Dick Dreissigacker, now 58, was a member of the 1972 U.S. Olympic Rowing Team and a Brown University product. He drifted out to California to take a rowing coaching position at Stanford, a school Peter, who's four years younger, was attending.

Dick was looking for a "secret weapon" after the 1972 Olympics and began to explore ways to improve oars, which had been crafted out of wood pretty much since humans started rowing boats through water. "There were quite a few companies making composite boats," said Peter, "but nobody was making oars."

By 1976, the Dreissigackers had built a prototype of a composite oar and began making them in the back of a bread truck. They looked at places around the country and decided to buy an old barn in Morrisville, part-

ly because they were from the Northeast, and started producing oars. By the 1980 Olympics, composite oars—made of carbon fiber and epoxies and glues—were standard, thanks to the work of the Dreissigacker boys.

The company makes "sweep" oars, oars for sculling and oars for a small niche of rowers who specialize in trans-Atlantic crossings. Oars range in price from about \$200 to more than \$400 each, and there are custom orders, blade and shaft repairs and stylized custom painting jobs that keep the company's employees busy. Dick says there are two other companies that are viewed as competitors with the Dreissigackers, but Concept2 controls about two-thirds of the world's competitive oar market.

In 1991, the Dreissigackers struck again, changing the shape of the oar blades to a bigger, "hatchet" style, a change that exploded through the rowing scene. At the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, said Peter, "boats were on the water, changing their blades to our style." There was some discussion of banning the bigger blade, which was more efficient and more effective, but the style quickly became the sport's standard. Two Middlebury teams and a University of Vermont women's team will be using Concept2 oars when they compete at the Head of the Charles next weekend. "If 75 or 80 percent of the teams at the Head of the Charles are using our oars," said Dick, "then almost 100 percent of those teams will have trained on our indoor trainers. They're pretty much the standard."

The Dreissigackers started making the indoor machines in the mid-1980s, the first versions little more than bike wheels and chains. Now the machines—their fourth version—come equipped with computers to monitor an athlete's performance and sell for \$850. There are hundreds of them in the Morrisville factory, stacked up and awaiting the start of the Christmas buying season.

The first indoor rowing machines were called rowing ergometers, or "Ergs," for short, and the Dreissigackers even developed a formula that allows the machines to measure rowing ability—a number that the rowing world now refers to as "Erg scores." "It's kind of like an athletic SAT score," said Dick, who attributes Peter's higher Erg score to the fact that he's four years younger, even though Dick rows almost every day of the summer on a lake at his cottage in Albany. There's a gym for Concept2 employees at the company's headquarters, and yes, it is filled with rowing machines. No longer in the barn, the company moved in 1984 to a more industrial location, not far from the center of Morrisville. The factory today is more than 45,000 square feet.

Sarah Tousignant, a senior at the University of Vermont and president of the school's women's rowing team, knows how important Concept2's Erg machines are. The Catamounts train six days a week on the Lamoille River using Dreissigacker oars. They'll soon move inside for the winter and shift onto Ergs. "We just ordered 12 new Ergs from them," she said.

Most of the Head of the Charles athletes will be using Dreissigacker oars, and nearly all will have trained and honed their skills on Dreissigacker indoor machines. So even if the Motley crew team gets beaten to the finish line on the Charles River next weekend, the Dreissigackers still win. With the Boston Red Sox out of baseball's playoffs, the eyes of the sporting world turn to Boston this month for one thing: The Head of the Charles Regatta.

A stretch? Consider that more than 7,000 athletes from around the globe will compete in 24 race events in the 41st annual Head of the Charles on Oct. 22-23. It is the world's

largest two-day rowing event. Rowing teams from the University of Vermont and Middlebury College will be among the competitors, as will brothers Dick and Pete Dreissigacker from Morrisville.

The Dreissigackers, both former Olympics rowers, have been competing in the Head of the Charles since 1978. In a way, they'll be in the majority of boats on the river, given that most of the competitors will be using oars made by the Dreissigackers' Concept2 company. "It's pretty much the most prestigious fall race," said Sarah Tousignant, women's team president of UVM rowing. "It's the race that everybody looks forward to and holds in high regard." The Head of the Charles was first held Oct. 16, 1965. As many as 300,000 spectators are expected to be on hand for the weekend.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to recognize the Chinese Lunar New Year. 2006 is the Year of the Dog.

The Chinese calendar is based on the cycles of the sun and the moon, and the Chinese Lunar New Year is the most important of Chinese festivals. Celebration begins on the first day of the first moon of the lunar calendar and ends on the full moon 15 days later, with the Lantern Festival. In order to prepare for the new year, families perform several rituals to cleanse the home and the spirit, to sweep away misfortune and to welcome in the new year with good luck, health, happiness and prosperity.

The Chinese lunar calendar is associated with a 12-year animal zodiac. According to ancient Chinese legend, Buddha asked all the animals to meet him on the Chinese Lunar New Year. Twelve animals came, and Buddha rewarded each animal by naming a year after each one. The 12 animals—Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig—represent a cyclical concept of time. He told each animal that the people born in their year would inherit some of the personality traits of that animal. It is said that those born in the Year of the Dog tend to be loyal, kind, and generous.

America is rich with the cultural traditions of many countries. In California, the Chinese-American community plays a vibrant and important part of our State's history. Celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year allows us to embrace this significant and most important cultural festival of the Chinese calendar.

I hope that the Chinese Lunar New Year brings good health, happiness, peace and prosperity to all. I give my very best wishes for an auspicious New Year. •

TRIBUTE TO THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY CHEERLEADERS

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute to the Northern Kentucky University cheerleaders. The squad was